

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

5.1. Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the film *Hidden Figures* (2016), it can be concluded that this film very much depicts the forms of structural racism and gender discrimination faced by African women in the professional work environment, especially at NASA in the 1960s. Through the characters of Katherine Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan, and Mary Jackson, this film shows that:

1. Structural racism and sexism are major barriers for black women in achieving equal positions, both in terms of facilities, professional recognition, and educational and career rights.
2. Forms of discrimination experienced include segregation of work spaces, removal of contributions from official documentation, restriction of positions, and denial of fair access to training and self-development.
3. The main characters in this film are able to overcome these limitations through intelligence, tenacity, solidarity, and courage. They prove that ability knows no skin color or gender.
4. Using Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Black Feminist Thought, the film can be seen as a narrative critique of discriminatory social and political systems, as well as a form of recognition of the contributions of African women to the history of science and technology.
5. The film *Hidden Figures* is not only entertainment, but also educational media that carries a strong message about social justice, gender equality, and the fight against discrimination.

5.2.Suggestions

Based on this research, the author makes several suggestions as follows:

1. For further researchers, it is suggested to explore the film Hidden Figures from different approaches, such as postcolonial perspectives, media studies, or psychological approaches to expand the study of the representation of minority identities and struggles.
2. For the general public and the world of education, this film can be used as learning material to understand history, strengthen social awareness, and encourage inclusive attitudes towards differences in race, gender, and social background. socialized in educational environments, especially in subjects related to gender equality, human rights, and sociology. The industrial sector is also expected to use this film as a reflection to improve work systems that are more inclusive of women and minority groups.
3. For filmmakers, Hidden Figures is an important example that true stories of women from minority groups need to be brought to the big screen more often, because these stories have great historical, moral and inspirational value.

Hidden Figures is a progressive and inspiring film, but it is important to note that its narrative still emphasizes change through institutional channels and individual adjustment. The film does not fully dismantle the structural roots of oppression against black women, preferring to focus on personal success stories as a form of legitimacy.

Feminist sociology reminds us that true change cannot rely solely on individual strength, but needs to be driven by collective awareness, policy changes, and the deconstruction of institutionalized patriarchal values in society.



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SUMMARY

This thesis critically analyzes how the film *Hidden Figures* (2016) portrays the experiences of African women working at NASA during the 1960s a period marked by racial segregation and gender inequality. Focusing on the characters of Katherine Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan, and Mary Jackson, the study explores how these women navigated and resisted systemic racism and sexism.

Using a qualitative descriptive method and grounded in Critical Race Theory, Black Feminist Thought, and liberal feminism, the research identifies various forms of discrimination both institutional and everyday that limit the women's professional and personal lives. These include physical segregation (restrooms, coffee pots), exclusion from decision-making spaces, denial of promotions, legal barriers to education, and emotional suppression.

The thesis highlights intersectional oppression where racism and patriarchy intersect, marginalizing the protagonists as both Black and female. However, the women resist these barriers through excellence, education, solidarity, and perseverance challenging power structures from within. Their resistance is seen as both individual empowerment and a critique of the broader white male-dominated system.

While the film celebrates liberal feminist ideals like meritocracy and individual agency, the thesis critiques its lack of attention to collective struggle and broader civil rights movements. The study concludes that *Hidden Figures* is a powerful representation of how Black women have historically been “hidden” in public narratives, and it calls for a more inclusive recognition of their roles in

shaping history. This thesis critically analyzes how the film *Hidden Figures* (2016) portrays the lived experiences of African women working at NASA during the 1960s a period defined by institutionalized racism, gender inequality, and Cold War-era scientific competition. Through a close examination of the central characters Katherine Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan, and Mary Jackson the study investigates how Black women navigated and resisted dual systems of oppression within a rigidly segregated and patriarchal professional environment.

Employing a qualitative descriptive method, the analysis is grounded in an interdisciplinary theoretical framework that includes Critical Race Theory (CRT), Black Feminist Thought, and liberal feminism. These lenses enable a multidimensional understanding of the various discriminatory mechanisms embedded in both the cinematic narrative and the historical reality it portrays. Among the key themes identified are institutional exclusion, everyday microaggressions, and legal discrimination manifested through segregated restrooms and coffee facilities, denial of professional advancement, lack of representation in leadership roles, and systemic barriers to accessing education and training.

A central finding of the thesis is the depiction of intersectionality a concept developed by Kimberlé Crenshaw which highlights how racism and sexism intertwine to doubly marginalize Black women. The characters in the film are not merely victims of racial or gender bias in isolation, but of compounded oppression that affects their opportunities, emotional well-being, and social mobility. Despite these barriers, the women demonstrate resilience and resistance through excellence in their fields, strategic use of legal systems, self-education, and mutual support.

Their achievements not only subvert dominant narratives but also challenge the racialized and gendered hierarchies of knowledge, science, and labor. The film's emphasis on individual meritocracy and personal perseverance aligns with liberal feminist ideals. However, this study also critiques the limitations of this framework arguing that *Hidden Figures* tends to downplay the collective efforts and organized resistance that were central to the broader civil rights and feminist movements of the era. The absence of a deeper engagement with activism, protest, and community struggle in the film may risk presenting structural change as the result of individual exceptionalism rather than collective agency.

Nevertheless, *Hidden Figures* represents a significant cultural intervention. It reclaims a suppressed historical narrative and re-centers Black women in the story of American scientific and national achievement. The film serves as both a corrective to historical omission and a symbolic affirmation of Black women's intellectual contributions offering alternative role models and inspiring future generations.

In conclusion, this thesis argues that *Hidden Figures* is more than a celebration of hidden talent; it is a politically charged narrative that prompts critical reflection on the continuing struggles for racial and gender justice. While the film is limited in some respects, it plays a vital role in reshaping public memory, expanding the scope of representation in mainstream media, and affirming the power of visibility in the fight for equality. The study calls for continued efforts to uncover and amplify the stories of marginalized groups, particularly Black women, whose contributions to history, science, and society have long been overlooked or erased.



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APPENDIXES





NS BUDD

